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REVIEWS OF RECENT BOOKS

* Students and lovers of the fine arts will find "Pictorial Composition," by H. R. Poore, recently published by the Baker & Taylor Company, a most valuable handbook. While in a sense it may be taken as a guide to the practitioner in art, it is primarily a work designed to explain to professionals and laymen alike the principles underlying pictorial composition. Mr. Poore speaks with the authority of an experienced artist, and he has wisely avoided lumbering his pages with a mass of technical details that would discourage and repel the reader rather than interest and inform him.

The book is professedly addressed to three types of art workers—the student of painting, the amateur photographer, and the professional artist. The timeliness and value of the work may readily be seen from the fact that while the student has been abundantly supplied with aids to decorative art, he has had furnished him very little concerning pictorial composition. It is lamentable how few people, even in cultured circles, are competent to pass a critical judgment on a work of art, to state wherein lie its excellencies or defects. A careful study of Mr. Poore's work will do much to banish this ignorance and incompetence, since he considers carefully the whole subject of pictorial composition and gives succinctly and clearly the reasons underlying different kinds of arrangement and the ends to be attained by them.

The question of balance has never been reduced to a theory or a stated set of rules which could be sustained by anything more than example, which, as a working basis, must require reconstruction with every change of subject. The work, therefore, is not a "how-to-do" book, and while the author is often argumentative he is never didactic. He simply sets forth well-digested views and supports them with an abundance of illustration, both textually and pictorially. To the general reader the volume will be of especial interest as explaining the *reasons* in picture



CARICATURE OF HIMSELF
By Phil May

BRUSH AND PENCIL

composition and thus affording an aid to critical judgment. Probably no clearer or more satisfactory work of the kind has ever been offered to the public, and one is inclined to urge every student of the fine arts to make a careful study of its pages.

J. N. Hudson Moore in "The Old China Book," published by Frederick A. Stokes Company, has furnished a comprehensive and eminently satisfactory manual on old china ware, especially Staffordshire, Wedgwood, lustre, and other English pottery and porcelain. Not the least valuable feature of the work is the profusion of its excellent half-tone illustrations, no less than one hundred and fifty reproductions being given of works of interest.

The book, as the author states, was compiled to meet the wants of those who own old china, particularly old English china, and would like to know more about it, and to stimulate others, to whom the fascinations of china collecting are as yet unknown. There are many more to whom the author hopes to appeal—those who are interested in their country's history during that strenuous time when the colonies cast aside their mother's hand and took their first steps alone, since many of these old wares are little less than chapters of history.

Mr. Moore gives an historical and pictorial survey of the whole subject of old china and leaves little to be desired either by the special student or the general reader. He gives an interesting account of early pottery, Staffordshire wares, portrait pieces, Liverpool and other printed wares, English porcelain and pottery, basaltes, lustres, white wares, Wedgwood, jugs, tea-pots, animal pieces, etc. The well-selected illustrations serve not less as a stimulant to the reader than as an enforcement of the text. An interesting feature of the work to the connoisseur is a list of views to be found on American, English, and miscellaneous china ware, and also a well-selected bibliography of works on pottery and porcelain. The book is entertainingly written and has the added value of being authoritative.



BOOKS RECEIVED

"American Literature," by William P. Trent. D. Appleton & Co. \$1.40 net.

"The Saint Louis World's Fair," by Charles M. Kurtz. Gottschalk Printing Co.